



## Section 5: Program Partners

### Getting Involved:

### Lifeline Crisis Centers and National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day



#### What is National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day?

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) Center for Mental Health Services is launching an annual national initiative called "National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day." National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is designated as a day in May of each year to coincide with "May Is Mental Health Month." This day presents an opportunity for SAMHSA and children's mental health initiatives to promote resilience, recovery, and the transformation of mental health services delivery for youth with serious mental health needs and their families.

The theme of the inaugural celebration of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is "Thriving in the Community." Children's mental health initiatives will hold similar events and activities throughout the country to build awareness that children's mental health needs are real and that progress is being made toward developing effective strategies for achieving the vision of a life in the community for everyone.

#### Why is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline participating in National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day?

National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day offers Lifeline crisis centers an opportunity to inform people about the services and supports available in their communities and to show that these services are working. Since its launch on January 1, 2005, the Lifeline network has worked to reduce the incidence of suicide nationally by increasing the availability of mental health resources in communities around the country. During this time, tens of thousands of calls to the Lifeline have been answered by trained local crisis counselors providing crisis counseling, suicide intervention, and mental health referral information.

On National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day, Lifeline crisis centers can take advantage of May Is Mental Health Month, national SAMHSA events, and the activities of other SAMHSA partners to show the public that children's mental health needs are real and treatable.

#### How can Lifeline crisis centers get involved?

Your crisis center can become involved in National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day in several ways. While it is important that activities are uniquely suited to the community, here are some ideas to consider as a starting point.

- Host an informational table at a local community festival or gathering.
- Collaborate with other local mental health service organizations to offer a workshop or seminar on topics such as teen depression or coping with crisis.



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- Partner with local children's mental health initiatives to engage the media and/or educate local policymakers on effective mental health practices, enlisting the assistance of local youth and families.
- Offer the expertise of your crisis center in communications outreach to the local organizers of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day events.
- Promote the Lifeline services by using the materials in the Lifeline Media Outreach Toolkit, which can be found at [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

### **Where can I get more information about National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day?**

Information and materials on National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day are available online at [www.systemsofcare.samhsa.gov](http://www.systemsofcare.samhsa.gov). For more information, please contact the Lifeline Communications Team by e-mail ([lifeline@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:lifeline@samhsa.hhs.gov)), by phone (1-800-790-2647), or on the Lifeline Web site at [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).